

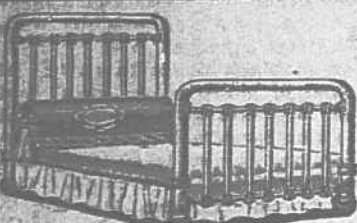
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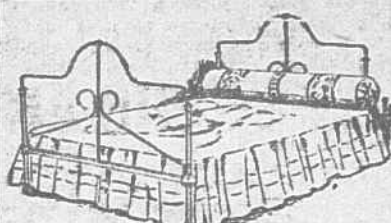
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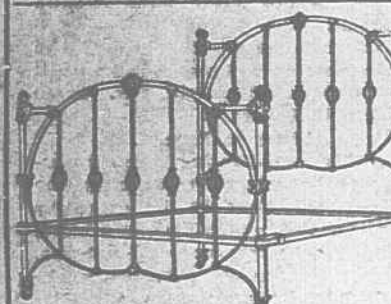
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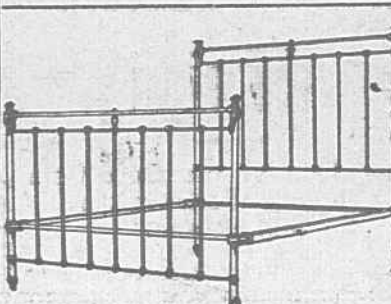
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The Silver Horde

By REX BEACH

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Author of "The Spoilers" and "The Barren"

HARPER & BROTHERS

The breath of the wild north-west is in this story of love and life and death. Rex Beach and Jack London have revealed the hidden mysteries and romances of the Alaskan wastes as have no other authors, and in this stirring, gripping narrative is shown the best work of Mr. Beach's career. Boyd Emerson and his superhuman efforts to win a fortune for the woman he loved; Cherry Malotte, the captivating, energetic young woman who combated desperate men on the battle-ground of their own choosing; Mildred Wayland, the imperious beauty and society favorite, whose hand was sought by bitter rivals who did not stop at murder; George Bait, the sturdy fisher hero, whose voice was like the roar of giant waves on a lee shore; "Fingerless" Fraser, whose quaint humor alone prevented him from going to jail, where he really belonged; and Willis Marsh, unprincipled intriguer and a betrayer of men and women—these are some of the characters and elements that make this story one of the greatest tales of adventure ever written.

CHAPTER I

THE trail to Kalvik leads down from the northward mountains over the tundra which flanks the tide flats, then creeps out upon the silt ice of the river and across to the village.

A Greek church, a Russian school with a cassocked priest presiding and about a hundred houses beside the cannery buildings make up the village.

Early one December afternoon there entered upon this trail from the timbered hills far away to the northward a weary team of six dogs, driven by two men.

The travelers had been plodding sullenly hour after hour, dispirited by the weight of the storm.

"Fingerless" Fraser broke trail, and Boyd Emerson drove.

"Another day like this and we'd both be snow blind," observed Emerson grimly as he bent to his task. "But it can't be far to the river now."

An hour later they dropped from the plain down through a gutterlike gully to the river, where they found a trail, glass hard beneath its downy covering. A cold breath sucked up from the sea. Ahead they saw the ragged ice upended by the tide. One branch led to the village, which they knew lay somewhere on the farther side, hidden by a mile or more of sifting snow.

The going here was so rough that both men leaped from their seats and ran beside the sled. They mounted a swelling ridge and rushed down to the level river ice beyond, but as they did so they heard a shivering creak on every side and saw water rising about the sled runners. Emerson shouted, the dogs leaped, but with a crash the ice gave way, and for a moment the water closed over him. "Fingerless" Fraser broke through in turn, gasping as the icy water rose to his armpits.

Each man aimed to secure an independent footing, but the efforts of all only enlarged the pool. Emerson shouted:

"Cut the team loose, quick!" But the other spat out a mouthful of salt water and spluttered:

"I—I can't swim!"

Whereupon the first speaker half swam himself through the slush to the forward end of the sled and, seeking out the sheath knife from beneath his parka, cut the harness of the two animals. Once free they scrambled to safety and rolled in the dry snow.

Emerson next attempted to lift the nose of the sled up on the ice, shouting at the remainder of the team to pull, but they only wagged their tails and whined. Each time he tried to lift the sled he crashed through fresh ice, finally bearing the next pair of dogs with him and then the two animals in the lead. All of them became hopelessly entangled.

Suddenly rang out a sharp command uttered in a new voice. Out of the snow fog from the direction in which they were headed broke a team, running full and free. Emerson marvelled at the outfit, having never seen the like in all his travels through the north, for each animal of the twelve stood hip high to a tall man, and they were like wolves of one pack, gray and gaunt and wicked. A tall Indian runner left the team and headed swiftly for the scene of the accident.

The man ran forward till he neared the edge of the opening where the tide had caused the floes to separate; then, flattening his body on the ice, he crawled off cautiously and seized the lead dog. Carefully he wormed his way backward to security.

It had been a ticklish operation, requiring nice skill and dexterity, but now that his footing was sure the

under exerted his whole strength, and as the dogs scratched and tore for a firm foothold the sled came clanking closer and closer through the half inch skin of ice. Then he reached down and dragged Emerson out, dripping and nerveless from his immersion. Together they rescued the outfit.

The person in the sledge had watched them silently, but now spoke to a strange patrol, and the hoarse voice to her words, for it was a woman.

"One mile you go—white man house. Go quick—you freeze."

"Ain't you got no dry clothes? Our stuff is soaked."

Again the Indian translated some words from the girl.

"No. You hurry and no stop here. We go quick over yonder. No can stop at all."

He hurried back to his mistress, cried once to the pack of gray dogs, "Qonah!" and they were off as if in chase.

As they dashed past both white men had one fleeting glimpse of a woman's face beneath a furred hood, and then it was gone.

"Did you see?" Fraser ejaculated. "Good Lord! It's a woman—a blond woman!"

"Nonsense! She must be a breed," said Emerson.

"Breeds don't have yellow hair!" declared the other.

Swiftly they bent in the free dogs and lashed the team to a run. They felt the chill of death in their bones, and instead of riding they ran with the sled till their blood beat like shells. Their outer coverings were like shells, and although their going was difficult and clumsy, they dared not stop, for this was the extreme peril of the north.

They swung over the river bank and into the midst of great rambling frame buildings. Their trail led them to a high banked cabin. Another mile would have meant disaster.

"Rout out the owner and tell him we're wet," said Emerson. "I'll free the dogs."

Before he could reach the cabin the door opened and Fraser appeared, a strange, dazed look on his face. He was followed by a large man of sullen countenance.

"It's no use," Fraser said. "We can't go in."

"What's wrong? Somebody sick?" "I don't know what's the matter. This man just says 'no'; that's all."

The fellow growled, "Yas; Ay got no room."

"But you don't understand," said Emerson. "We're wet. We broke through the ice. Never mind the room. We'll get along somehow."

"You can't come in here. You find another house free mile furder."

The traveler pushed forward. Involuntarily the watchman drew back, whereupon the unwelcome visitor crowded past, jostling his inhospitable host roughly. Emerson's quick action gained him entrance, and Fraser followed behind into the living room, where a flat nosed squaw withdrew before them. The young man addressed her peremptorily:

"Punch up that fire and get us something to eat, quick!"

Sour obedience followed. Fraser had been watching the fellow and now remarked to his companion:

"Say, what ails that gauner?" The assumption of good nature fell away from Boyd Emerson as he replied:

"I never knew anybody to refuse shelter to freezing men before."

The watchman reappeared. "You can't stop here!" he said. "Ay got orders. By Yingo, Ay throw you out!"

He stooped and gathered up the garments nearest him, then stepped to the outer door, but before he could make good his threat Emerson whirled like a cat, his deep set eyes dark with sudden fury, and seized his host by the nape of the neck. He jerked him back so roughly that the wet clothes flapped to the floor in four directions, whereat the Scandinavian let forth a bellow, but Emerson struck him heavily on the jaw with his open hand, then buried him backward into the room so violently that he reeled, and his legs colliding with a bench, he fell against the wall. His assailant stepped in and throttled him, bending his head violently against the logs. Emerson, stepping back, spoke in a quivering voice which Fraser had never heard before:

"I'm just playing with you now. I don't want to hurt you."

"Get out of my house! Ay got orders!" cried the watchman and made for him again.

Emerson dragged him to his own doorkill, jerked the door open and kicked him out into the snow, then barred the entrance and returned to the warmth of the logs, his face convulsed and his lips working.

In the snow. They have only one treatment for all diseases. "It's your—father!" The girl shook her head.

"Then your husband—I should like to arrange with him to hire lodgings for a few days. The matter of money?"

Again she came to his rescue. "I am the man of the house. I'm boss here. You are quite welcome to

stay as long as you wish. Consider me as my hospitality and treat it as a favor. I'm sure they may be company men."

"We showed a Swede out on his back," declared Fraser, swelling with conscious importance. "and I guess he's crabbled us with the other square heads."

"Oh, no! They have instructions not to harbor any travelers. It's as much as his job is worth for any of them to entertain you. Now, won't you make yourselves at home while Constantine attends to your dogs? Dinner will soon be ready."

He murmured "Gladly" and then lost himself in wonder at this well groomed girl living amid such surroundings. Undoubtedly pretty, graceful in her movements, bearing herself with certainty and poise, who was she? Where did she come from? And what in the world was she doing here?

He became aware that "Fingerless" Fraser was making the introductions. "This is Mr. Emerson. My name is French. I'm one of the Virginia Frenches, you know. I think you have heard of them. No? Well, they're the real thing."

Emerson recalled her acknowledgment by breaking in roughly: "His name isn't French at all, madam; it's Fraser—'Fingerless' Fraser. He's an utterly worthless rogue and absolutely unreliable, so far as I can learn. I picked him up on the ice in Norton sound with a marshal at his heels."

"That marshal wasn't after me," stoutly denied Fraser, quite unabashed. "Why, he's a friend of mine—we're regular chums. Everybody knows that. He wanted to give me some papers to take outside, that's all."

Boyd shrugged his shoulders indifferently: "Warrants!"

Their hostess, greatly amused, prevented any further argument by saying: "I suppose you are bound for the States?"

(To be continued.)

GOOD RACING AT FAIRMONT

First Day's Program of the Fall Fair There is a Fine One.

The Fairmont races yesterday afternoon resulted as follows: First Race, 2:15 Pace—Best 3 in 5—Purse \$500.

Lady Corcoran, br. m. by Alexander (Dean) 1 5 1 2 4 1

Ernest Burns, b. h., by Bobby Burns (Cole) 3 3 2 1 1 2

Sweetheart, b. m. by Oetral (McHenry) 2 1 4 4 3 4

Bell Hopkins, b. m. by Bright Bell (Johnson) 4 2 6 3 2 1

Mary Jane, b. m. by Dunkirk (Haywood) 6 4 3 r o

Annie V. Brino, b. m. by Wild Brino (Rombaugh) 8 6 5 r o

Chestnut, s. m. by The Imitator (Gordon) 5 8 7 r o

Willur Parole, b. m. by Parole Flick 7 7

Time—2:18 1-4, 2:17 3-4, 2:17 3-4, 2:17 1-4, 2:20, 2:21 1-4.

Second Race—2:24 Trot—Best 3 in 5—Purse \$500.

John R., b. g. by Ashland C. (Smith) 1 1 1

Lady Bell, b. m. by Charleston (Longnecker) 2 2 4

Adreal, b. h. by Advertiser (Johnson) 5 5 2

Lady in Black, b. m. by Ondal (Traynor) 4 4 3

Axlford, s. m. by Refero (Fleming) 6 3 2

Rosalie Girl, s. m. by Hydrogen (Wiseman) 3 6 0

Mona Wilkes, b. m. by Baron Wilkes (Friedman) 7 7 7

Time—2:26 3-4, 2:23 1-4, 2:24 1-4.

Third Race—2:28 Trot for 3 Year Olds—Best 2 in 3—Purse \$500.

Onward Todd, b. h. by Todd (Traynor) 1 1

Major Chimes, b. g. by Nor Chimes (Wiseman) 2 3

Baron Camden, b. g. by Baron Bell (Hedrick) 4 2

Oettie, b. m. by Ozone (Burney) 3 4

Johnnie P., br. g. by Major Higginson (Wilkie) 5 5

Time—2:31, 2:31 1-4.

Fourth Race—Mile Dash—Purse \$500.

Maxton, 119, (R. Murphy), won; Parkina, 119, (Deem), second; Lois Cavanaugh, 119, (Jo-dan), third; Stromland, 119, (Cottrell), and New Year 11 119, (Meyers), also ran. Time, 1:54.

Fifth Race—5-8 Mile Dash—Purse \$100.

Amerique, 119, (Myers), won; Dokey, 119, (Ramsey), second; Buster B., (R. Murphy), third; Garter, 119, (Murphy), also ran. Lady Arion, 119, (Conley), left. Time, 1:04.

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